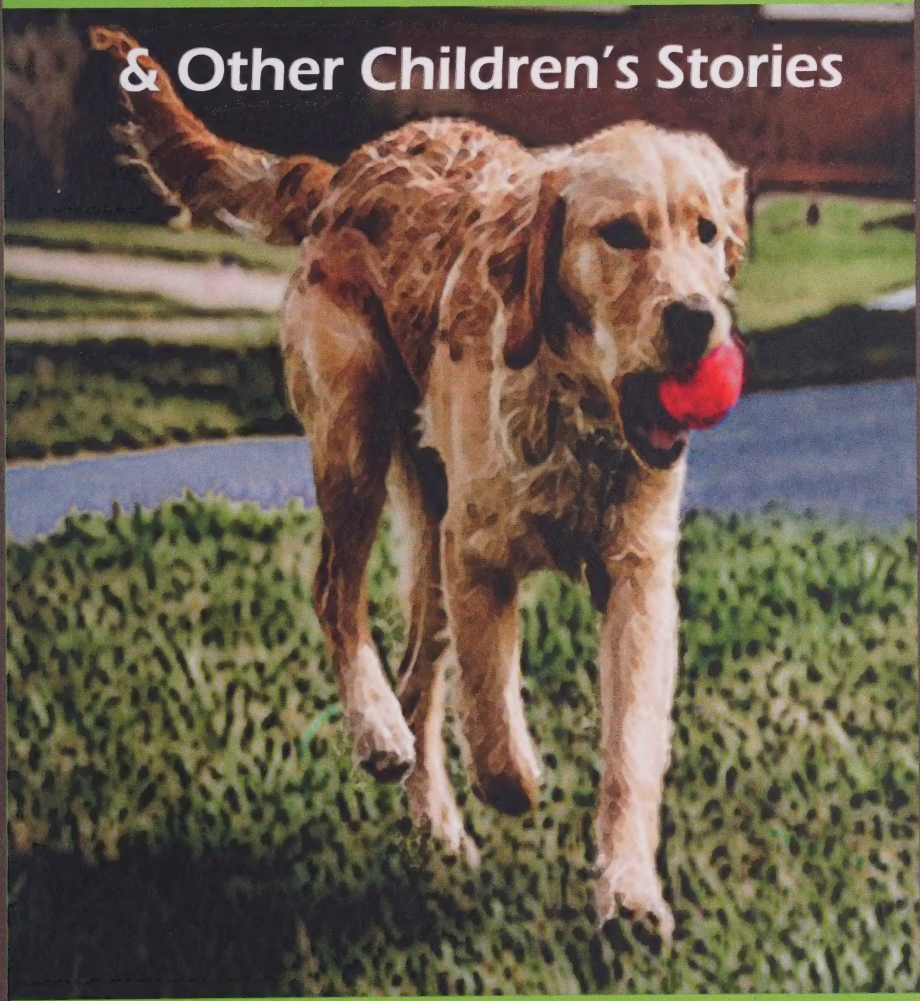
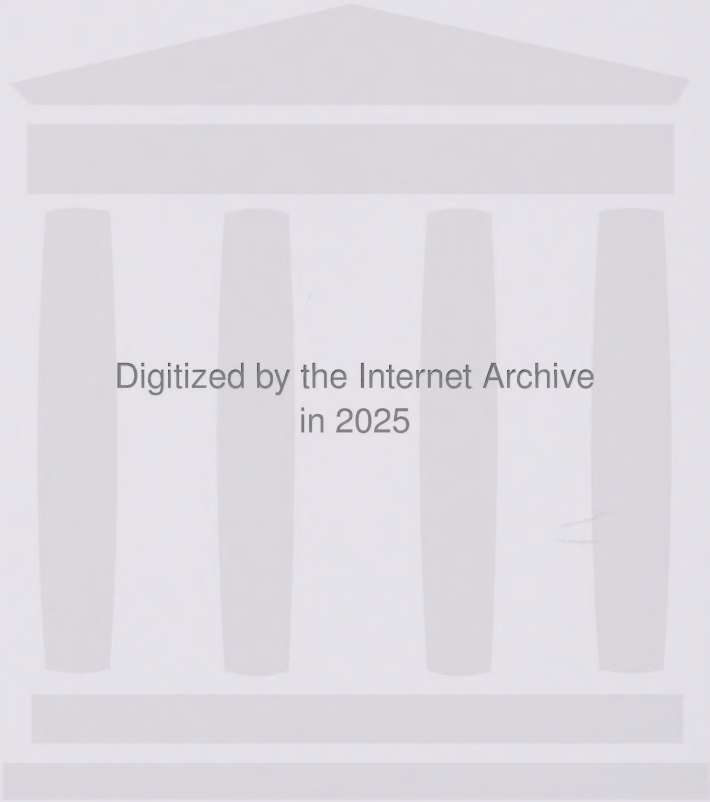
The Dog Who Could Not Bark

& Other Children's Stories



By Rudyard Fearon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THE DOG WHO COULD NOT BARK

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RWF Publishing. Toronto. Canada
2017

Fearon, Rudyard, 1953-, author
The dog who could not bark & other children's stories

ISBN 9781521047200
I. Title.
PS8561.E22D63 2017, jC813'.6, C2017-900764-5

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Justin Augustine -- I know my ABCs

Justin Augustine was a little boy who had a funny name, but liked school very much.

"Justin Augustine, where have you been?" mocked the idle kids playing on the street one day.

"Down at the schoolhouse learning my ABCs," he answered shyly.

"Will you stop and play?" asked the idle kids.

"Sorry, I have to go home to help my mommy and daddy with the farm, then do my homework."

"Justin Augustine, you are such a sissy... ha-ha-ha..." they laughed. But Justin Augustine did not care. He just hippity-hoppity-hopped on home.

The next day Justin Augustine went to school.

"Justin Augustine, where have you been?" mocked the idle kids playing on the street.

"Down at the schoolhouse where I learned to sing my ABCs. Do you want to hear my song? A-B-C-D-E-F-G-H-I-J-K-L-M-N-O-P-Q-R-S-T-U-V-W-X-Y and Z. Now I know my ABCs. Will you sing along with me?"

"No! No!" cried the idle kids, "We don't want to know your ABCs?" But Justin Augustine did not care. He just hippity-hoppity-hopped on home.

The following day Justin Augustine went to school again.

"Justin Augustine, where have you been?" mocked the idle kids on the street.

"Down at the schoolhouse where I learned to count from one to ten. Do you want to hear me count?" He counted his fingers, "One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten. I can do it backwards too."

"No! No!" cried the idle kids, "Run on home to your mommy and daddy."

* * * *

Ten years later Justin Augustine went away to college and on a visit home he found the same kids on the street.

"Justin Augustine, where have you been?" they called out to him.

"Away at college studying to be a lawyer."

"Justin Augustine, you are nothing but a wimp... and will be nothing but a wimp... ha-ha-ha..." they laughed.

* * * *

Twenty years later Justin Augustine became the president of his country. He came home one day to take his parents to the Presidential Palace where he now lived and where all the other presidents before him had lived.

"President Justin Augustine!!!" shouted the big crowd as they waved happily at him. They were proud of him, Justin Augustine, the boy with the funny name who became president.

"Justin Augustine, where have you been?" shouted the idle men begging on the street. They were so poor they could not take care of themselves or their families.

"At the Presidential Palace running the whole country," answered President Justin Augustine.

"Can we come and work with you at the Presidential Palace?" asked the idle men.

"Sure," said President Justin Augustine, "if you can count from one to ten." The idle men looked at each other. None of them could count from one to ten.

"Okay, okay," said President Justine Augustine, "if you can say your ABCs."

Again they looked at each other. None of them could say their ABCs. "Sorry, guys!" the President said and started to sing. "A-B-C-D-E-F-G-H- I-J-K-L-M-N-O-P-Q-R-S-T-U-V-W-X-Y and Z. I am glad I know my ABCs." He then looked at the idle men, shook his head, and hippity-hoppity- hopped with his family and friends back to the Presidential Palace.

My Dog Fred

This is me. And my dog Fred. At times Fred can be bad. When Fred is bad, he is very bad. Yesterday, Fred was bad. He chased the mailman up and down the road. He chased the neighbour's cat up and over the fence. But most of the time Fred is good. When Fred is good, he is very good.

Today, he dragged a fireman out of a burning house. Then we went to the playground. It was fun! We slid piggyback down the slide. We swung up and over the trees. Then Fred decided to be bad. He caught the kids' Frisbee and wouldn't give it back. The kids chased him around and all about. But they weren't mad. They had fun chasing Fred.

Then we went home. Mom made a big bubble bath. Then we played some more, washing and splashing, until Mom had to come and get us out Then we had supper. Fred sat in his high chair and chomped noisily on his bone. Then the old grandfather clock struck eight. Fred and I knew it was beddy time. I hugged and kissed Mommy. I hugged and kissed Daddy. Fred slurped his long red tongue all over them. This is me. And my dog Fred. I love Fred. And Fred loves me.

"Fred, say goodnight."

"BOW-WOW-WOW!"

The Dog Who Could Not Bark

Once upon a time, in the town of Meansville, there lived a mean old farmer named Brown. Farmer Brown had a dog named Mange. Mange was a wimpy, skimpy little dog who had a very, very loud bark. Because of Mange's loud bark, the farm was safe from trespassers.

One day while Mange was eating a bone, a piece stuck in his throat, and he could not bark anymore. When Farmer Brown found out that Mange could not bark, he refused to wash and feed him.

"You will not eat my food anymore!" he shouted. "You do not bark! What good is a dog if he does not bark? Tomorrow I'll buy a new dog. I'll need your kennel for my new dog. Get out this minute!"

Mange was so scared that he ran off. He did not have anywhere to go and so he began to live on the street. But life was tough living on the street. The kids made fun of him. The stray dogs and even the cats teased him. Old ladies with brooms would smack him whenever he dared to beg for food. Poor Mange did not have a friend.

One day a stranger came to town. He felt hungry and went into a restaurant to have a meal. In the corner of the restaurant he noticed a wimpy, skimpy little dog half asleep.

"Come here boy," called the stranger. The dog did not stir. "Come here little dog," he called again and snapped his fingers. Mange looked up at the stranger with hunger in his eyes.

"Waiter!" shouted the stranger, "Please bring this poor hungry dog some food." The waiter stared at Mange in disgust.

"Mister, that dog does not deserve to eat!"

"Why say such a thing?" asked the stranger.

"Because he does not bark, that's why! Whoever heard of a dog that does not bark?" the waiter laughed.

"Bring the food, please," the stranger insisted. Mange was thankful for the food and licked the stranger's hand. The stranger patted him gently on the head. "Who owns this dog?" asked the stranger.

"It used to be Farmer Brown's dog," answered the waiter, "but as I said, who wants a dog that does not bark?"

The stranger felt sorry for the dog and decided to give him a home. The stranger lived on a little farm with his cows, horses, pigs, and chickens. The lives of these farm animals were made miserable by stray dogs, stray cats, mice, and fleas. The stray dogs chased the pigs. The stray cats ate the eggs. The mice ate the cheese. The fleas bit the horses. But when they saw the strange dog, they all ran away and hid.

The stranger was happy. The farm animals were happy. Mange was happy too. But the happiness did not last long, for the stray dogs, stray cats, mice, and fleas all returned when they realized that the wimpy, skimpy little dog had no bark.

"If a dog does not bark, he hasn't got a bite," they all said. And life was miserable again for the farm animals. The stranger was sad. Mange was sad too. If only he had his very, very loud bark... Just then, a flea crawled into the fur on Mange's neck. The flea had so much fun, he called his friends. Soon Mange's neck was all covered with fleas. They bit, tickled, and teased him. Mange was so itchy that he scratched his neck. He scratched his throat. Then it happened! The bone got unstuck! First it was a growl, then a wow... then a very, very loud,

"Bow-wow!
Wow!
WOW!"

The fleas were so frightened, they jumped for cover! The stray dogs, the stray cats, and mice all ran away and never returned. The farm animals were happy. The farmer was happy. And Mange was very, very happy.

If a dog does not bite, he certainly has to bark.

Mr. Fire and Mr. Water

Mr. Fire and Mr. Water once lived in the town of Calmsville. The townspeople, who were mainly farmers, called them Mister because they were very important to the town of Calmsville. Mr. Water rained on the fields and made the grass, fruits and vegetables grow. Mr. Fire burned the rubbish and the bushes to make new paths for the farmers to sow more crops. Because they often worked together, they became good friends. Mr. Water would climb into the pot and Mr. Fire would provide the heat from underneath to cook big meals for the hungry farmers. One day, Mr. Fire became very, very angry with the people of Calmsville and most of all, with Mr. Water. So Mr. Water went to Mr. Fire to ask him what was wrong:

"What's the matter, my old friend?
You act as if the world is coming to an end.
You do not flare, you do not burn.
So I come to you to learn."

Mr. Fire sparked his temper and answered:
"Friends we are never!
They think you are so clever,
But I'll show them.
Ahem! Ahem! Ahem!"

And then with a shoosh he shot up into the sky in one big fiery ball. The whole town was scared because they had never seen Mr. Fire so angry before. What Mr. Fire did not say was that he was jealous, and he was hopping mad. He felt Mr. Water was becoming more important than him. The people seemed to have more need of Mr. Water than of him. After he cooked the pots, cleared the paths, and did all the odd jobs, Mr. Water was needed to put him out. It was always, "Mr. Water! Mr. Water...!"

"Well," he thought, "I'm going to show those poor fools who is the boss around here. They will forever fear and respect me after I'm finished with their crops and homes. Mr. Water too will know the true might of Mr. Fire!"

The people of Calmsville were terrified. If Mr. Fire burned their crops, cattle, and homes, as he threatened to do, they would certainly starve to death. Mr. Fire was their trusted friend and servant. They could not understand why he wanted to harm them.

On the thirteenth day of the month, Mr. Fire spread his anger upon the land. The crops in the field raged with fire. The animals ran wildly for shelter, and the people of Calmsville shook with fear. If they did not act quickly they would lose everything they owned. So they ran to Mr. Water and begged him for help:

"Mr. Water! Mr. Water!
Our fields are on fire.
We need you Mr. Water
To put out Mr. Fire."

But Mr. Water would not help:

"Go away my friends,
My trusted friends.
It is not right
To fight and fight."

Disappointed, the people returned to their homes. And the rage of Mr. Fire spread upon the land. He burned the barns, and the horses fled. He burned the houses, and the people fled:

"Mr. Water! Mr. Water!
Our houses are on fire.
We need you, Mr. Water,
To put out Mr. Fire."

Mr. Water looked at their terrified faces. His anger spurted a thousand feet up in the air. He shouted:

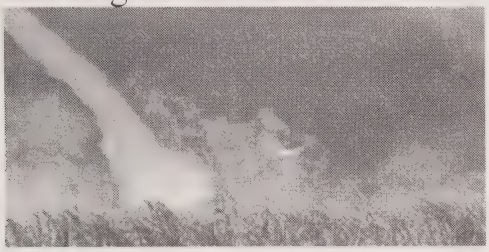
"Okay, Mr. Fire, you've been bad,
You are making everyone sad.
Please stop your curse

Or I'll quench your thirst."

Mr. Fire answered:

"You can spurt
And you can shout,
But I will burn, burn
And you will never put me out."

And so these two friends went to war. Mr. Fire flared... Mr. Water spurted... Mr. Fire shooshed... Mr. Water whooshed... Soon the two were engulfed in a huge ball of flame.



The whole town watched nervously as the two struggled together. After a long and bitter fight, Mr. Water conquered. The people were glad the fight was over. They begged the two to make up. And in a way they did, because from that day forward Mr. Fire and Mr. Water worked together the way they had done before the great battle. But they were no longer the friends they once were. Instead, they worked together as the natural enemies they still are to this day.

The Little Bouncing Ball

Bounce, bounce goes the little bouncing ball. It bounces under her legs, it bounces over her head, it bounces in the air... it just seems to bounce everywhere!

"Dad, I cannot catch my bouncing ball!" cried Sue. Dad peered over his paper and smiled at Sue. He had just bought her the little bouncing ball for her fourth birthday.

"That's how bouncing balls are, dear," said Dad, smiling. "Try again, you'll get it this time."

Bounce, bounce goes the little bouncing ball. It bounces under her legs, it bounces over her head, it bounces in the air... it just seems to bounce everywhere! Sue was so pooped, she fell down in the grass. "Dad!" she cried again, "please help me catch my bouncing ball."

"Okay, okay," said Dad as he put aside his paper. "In a jiffy, I'll get your bouncing ball." Bounce, bounce goes the little bouncing ball. It bounces under his legs, it bounces over his head, it bounces in the air... it just seems to bounce everywhere! Dad was so pooped, he too fell down in the grass.

"Geez!" said Dad, panting, "your bouncing ball seems to have a mind of its own."

"I want my bouncing ball!" cried Sue.

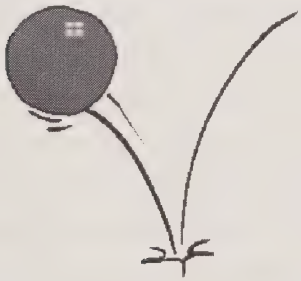
"Okay, okay," said Dad, "I'll ring up the firemen, they'll certainly catch your bouncing ball." Dad rang up the firemen and they came zooming down the street in their big red fire trucks.

"And what can we do for you, little girl?" asked the firemen, dressed in their steely hats and funny suits.

"Can you catch my bouncing ball? Can you, can you?" asked Sue eagerly.

"We sure can," answered the firemen. Bounce, bounce goes the bouncing ball. It bounces under their legs, it bounces over their heads, it bounces in the air... it just seems to bounce everywhere!

"Geez!" said the pooped firemen as they too fell down in the grass, "your bouncing ball seems to have a mind of its own."



Sue was very sad. She was about to cry.

"Look!" shouted Dad, pointing at the bouncing ball, bouncing slowly towards Sue. Bounce, bounce, the little bouncing ball bounced right into Sue's lap. It too was pooped.

"Go to your room" said Sue. "You have been bad. You almost made me cry."

Cat and Dog

Cat and Dog always hated each other. But one day Cat went to Dog and said, "Dog, I have been thinking. We live in the same house. We have the same master... Don't you think that we should be friends?"

Dog thought about it for a long while and said, "Cat, you are so right... We should be friends. We both love our master, and I know that our master loves us both. But all we do is fight. It would really please our master if we became friends."

"Good!" said Cat, "then we should shake on it." Cat extended his right paw. Dog extended his right paw. And they shook on it. They were soon acting as good friends. They hunted together. They ate together. They played together. They even slept together. And they were really pleased that they had made their master very pleased.

But one day while their master was away, Big Bad Wolf wandered into the yard. Cat and Dog were having their afternoon nap. Big Bad Wolf moved quietly and slowly... until he was right over them. Cat, who was never a sound sleeper, opened his eyes just as Wolf was about to pounce on him. Up he jumped, right over Wolf, and into the pear tree. Dog, who was dreaming, opened his eyes and saw Wolf. He thought to himself:

"Gosh this dream seemed so real." And promptly went back to sleep. It was only when Wolf had him by the collar that he realized what was really happening. Frightened, he looked around for Cat. There was no Cat.

Wolf had eaten Cat!

This thought made him very angry. So he bit Wolf on the neck. He bit Wolf on the foot.

Wolf thought, "My God, this Dog is mad!" So he ran, and ran. He ran around the house. And Dog chased him. He ran into the bushes and Dog chased him. Dog bit him on the tail; then abandoned the chase.

Sadly, Dog walked back to the yard.
"Poor Cat. I have lost my friend."

****

"Bravo! Bravo!"

The sound came from the pear tree. Dog looked up. There was Cat perched high on a branch. When Cat came down, Dog asked Cat,

"Cat why did you run off and leave me like that!" Cat tried to explain, but Dog pretended not to hear. "Cat, you are no longer my friend!" he said, and playfully chased Cat back up the tree.

Sue's Bouncing Ball

Sue was six. It was her birthday and Dad had bought her a special birthday present. All day, Sue stared at the fancy little box wrapped in yellow ribbons, with a red bow on top. She wondered and wondered, what was in the box. Finally, curiosity got the better of her. She could take it no longer. She went looking for Dad and found him in the den reading the newspaper.

"Dad," she pleaded in her tiniest voice, "can I open my birthday present now? Please!" Dad looked at Sue and smiled. He knew she was much too excited to wait any longer. But before Dad could even say, "Go ahead..." Sue already had the box in her hand. Quickly she tore it open and there, lying peacefully on its seam, was a red, rubber, bouncing ball -- just what she had wanted. She was so happy that she started jumping for joy. She hugged Dad by his legs. He bent over and she kissed him.

"Geez, thanks Dad. Now, can I play with my little bouncing ball at the playground?" Dad said she could and off she ran to the playground.

"Look what my Dad bought me!" Mary, John, and Anne ran over to look at Sue's bouncing ball.

"Can I play with it?" asked Mary, the eldest.

"Sure, we all can," said Sue. "I'm going to bounce it and see who will be the first to catch it."

Sue bounced the ball as hard as she could. The ball flew up into the air, for a moment it seemed to hang high over their heads, and then it fell. The kids chased after the ball, but it flew back up into the air. Mary ran beneath it, cupped her hands and waited for it to fall. It fell, but not into her hands. It changed its course and fell between John and Anne. The kids rushed to catch it again, but the little ball bounced between their legs and over their heads. No one caught the little bouncing ball and the kids soon became weary.

"I'm tired," said Mary.

"I'm tired," said John.

"I'm tired," said Anne.

"I'm tired too," said Sue.

So they all went home leaving the little bouncing ball behind. The very next day, Sue and her friends went to the playground to look for the little bouncing ball. To their surprise, the little red ball was there bouncing merrily along.

"I have a plan," said John. "Let us form a circle and when the ball bounces between us, one of us will try to catch it."

They formed a circle, but without any luck. The little ball bounced between their legs and over their heads. They ran after the ball, chasing it with every last bit of energy they had. Nobody could catch the little bouncing ball and the kids became exhausted.

"I'm tired," said Mary.

"I'm tired," said John.

"I'm tired," said Anne.

"I'm tired too," said Sue.

And they all went home leaving the little bouncing ball. The next day, off they went to the playground in search of the little bouncing ball. To their surprise, the little red ball was there once again bouncing merrily along.

"I have a plan," said Anne, unfolding a net from the knapsack she had brought along. "Let's spread this net with each of us holding one end. This time we will certainly catch the little bouncing ball."

With each of them holding one end, they ran with the open net right beneath the falling ball. The ball fell into the net and bounced right out again; into the net and bounced right out again.

"Each of you, bring your end up!" cried Anne. They brought their ends up, but not quickly enough. The little bouncing ball popped out and bounced away.

"I'm tired", said Mary.

"I'm tired", said John.

"I'm tired", said Anne.

"I'm tired too", said Sue.

They all went home leaving the little bouncing ball. And so, the next day, they went again to the playground to look for the bouncing ball. And to their surprise, the little red ball was there still bouncing merrily along.

This time, no one had a plan so they sat and watched as the little ball bounced merrily along.

"There," cried Mary, pointing, "there is Jake the Great!"

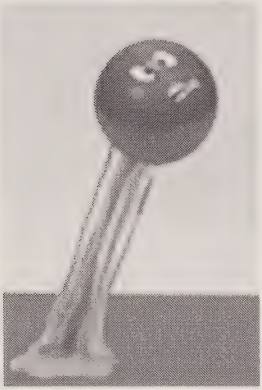
"Jake!" called Sue. Jake was seven feet tall and he often boasted that he was the best basketball player in the land. With a couple of steps, Jake stood towering over Sue and her friends. Sue explained how they tried to catch her little bouncing ball - but just could not.

"Can you help us?" they asked. Jake chewed on his bubble gum. He blew a huge bubble until it burst in his face.

"I am Jake the Great, the best basketball player in the land. With ease, I'll have your little ball in hand." But the little red ball bounced under Jake's legs and over his head. Jake the Great was so embarrassed; he hung his head in shame - and ran home.

Then Sue thought of a plan. Quickly she gathered up all the sticky chewing gum she could find around the playground. Cleverly, she spread chewing gum in a path along the ground.

"Come on you guys!" she called, "chase the bouncing ball against this wall!" The bouncing ball flew high into the air, bounced along the wall, and then along the ground right into the path of Sue's sticky chewing gum. It tried to bounce up, tried to bounce up - but just could not!



"Gotcha!" the happy kids shouted as they ran to retrieve the little bouncing ball. And the kids were certainly weary.

"I'm tired," said Mary.

"I'm tired," said John.

"I'm tired," said Anne.

"I'm tired too," said Sue.

And they all went home, with Sue clutching very tightly, her little red, bouncing ball.

Manufactured by Amazon.ca
Bolton, ON

ISBN 9781521047200